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SOCIAL SURVEY DIVISION

Restrictions at Stonehenge: the reactions of visitors to limitations in access

Report of a survey carried out by
Social Survey Division of OPCS
for the Department of Environment

Sheila Bainbridge



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Contents

	Summary	Page 1
1.	Introduction	2
	Aim of the survey	3
	Method	3
	The sample	3
2.	Response	4
3.	Who visits Stonehenge in mid July?	6
	Age and sex of the sample	6
	Residence	6
	Level of interest	7
4.	Details of the visit	8
	Whether on organised tour or visiting privately	8
	Length of visit	8
	How visitors viewed Stonehenge	8
5.	Visitors' initial reactions to the new system of viewing Stonehenge	9
	Who is not satisfied with the new system?	9
	Summary	12
6.	Advantages and disadvantages of the new viewing system	13
	Advantages	13
	Disadvantages	13
7.	Greater restrictions in access	14
8.	Visitors' understanding of the wear and damage to Stonehenge	15
	Wear or damage to the stones	15
	Wear or damage to the ground	16
9.	The balance of opinion between the need for preservation and the desire for access	17
	Who holds those opinions?	19
	Summary	21
10.	Overall satisfaction with the new viewing system	22
11.	Suggestions for better ways of viewing Stonehenge	23

12. Visitors' aids to understanding Stonehenge	Page
	24
The model	24
Information boards	24
Leaflet	25
Exhibition centre	25
Museums	26
The staff	26
 Appendix 1 Sampling report	 28
Sample requirements	28
Sample design	28
Setting the quotas	29
Quotas set	30
Interviewing	30
Comparison of interviewers' estimates of age with the actual age of informants	30
 Appendix 2 The questionnaire	 32

Summary

1. Following the Department of the Environment's decision to restrict public access to Stonehenge a survey was carried out by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, in July 1978, to assess the reaction of visitors to the new viewing arrangements.
2. The initial reaction of visitors to the restrictions in access left 21% very satisfied, 48% satisfied and 31% not satisfied with the arrangements.
3. The main factors contributing to dissatisfaction were people's previous experiences and current expectations. Visitors who had previously enjoyed free access to the stones were more dissatisfied with the restrictions than those who had never been to Stonehenge before. Similarly visitors expecting to be able to walk among the stones and touch them were more dissatisfied than those with no expectations.
4. In general men were more likely to be dissatisfied than women. Opinions also tended to mellow with age, younger visitors being more dissatisfied than the older visitors. United Kingdom residents expressed more dissatisfaction than visitors from overseas as did those who had arranged their own visit rather than going as part of an organised tour.
5. It is likely that the proportion of visitors dissatisfied with the viewing arrangements would increase from one third to two thirds if further restrictions were imposed allowing no close-up view of the stones.
6. Most visitors knew that damage was being done to the stones although this was generally not attributed to the non-malicious everyday wear and tear brought about by thousands of visitors. However, most people were unaware that damage was occurring to the archaeological features of the ground around the stones.
7. Although almost all visitors agreed with a need to protect Stonehenge, one quarter felt that people have a right to walk among the stones and over one half felt that they should be able to get closer than the current arrangements allow.
8. The balance of opinion between the need for preservation of the monument and the desire for closer access fell into three main categories. The view that preservation was of paramount importance was endorsed by two fifths of visitors; that preservation was important but nevertheless closer access should be possible was the opinion of three tenths; while a conflict of opinions, on the one hand understanding the need for preservation but also feeling that people possess some rights over their national heritage, was endorsed by one fifth of visitors.

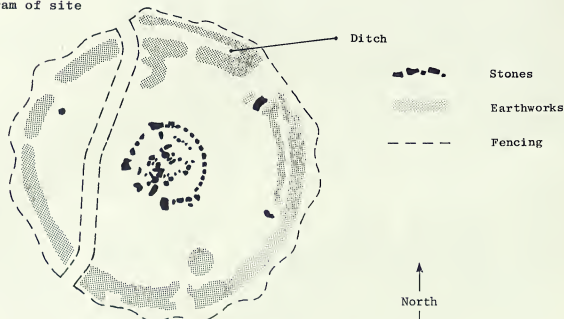
1. Introduction

Stonehenge, standing on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire, is considered by many to be the most important remaining monument of antiquity in the British Isles. It arouses the wonder and curiosity of people from all over the world and thousands flock to visit the site each year. Of monuments in the care of the Department of the Environment (DOE), it is second only to the Tower of London in its popularity.

Since the monument was presented to the nation, Stonehenge has provided the government department responsible for its upkeep (now the DOE) with conflicting commitments. On the one hand the monument is to be made available for the enjoyment of the general public but on the other it is to be preserved for the benefit of posterity. When the rate of visitors reached some 2,000 per hour during the summer season the DOE realised that free access and preservation were incompatible aims. Stonehenge was beginning to suffer from visible wear and tear. By and large this was not due to wilful damage but rather the cumulative effects of thousands of feet trampling the foundations and the earthworks around the stones and thousands of hands touching the stones, particularly the shallow carvings, whilst visitors tried to absorb some of the atmosphere created by the monument's age, size and uncertainty of how and why it was built.

Faced with the dilemma brought about by the success of Stonehenge as a tourist attraction, it was decided that preservation was more important to the nation than complete freedom of access and so in May 1978 fencing was erected and a new system of viewing Stonehenge was introduced (see diagram of site).

Figure 1 Diagram of site



Gravel, which was laid on the ground around the stones nine years previously, was removed as this had been causing unnecessary erosion to the base of the stones. Turf was laid in its place which improved the appearance of the site. Rope fencing was erected around the outside perimeter of the ditch and bordering a pathway, covered in protective matting, which runs between the ditch and the stones. Visitors are free to wander around the outside of the perimeter fence and along the pathway to get a closer look at the stones, but the public are not allowed within the stone circle.

Following these changes the DOE undertook to ask for visitors' comments on the new arrangements and for this purpose an interview survey was carried out by the Social Survey Division of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys in July 1978.

Aim of the survey

The survey aimed to obtain visitors' views on the current viewing arrangements at Stonehenge and to assess the balance of opinion between preservation and freedom of access.

Method

Exploratory discussions and interviews were carried out during May 1978 to devise an appropriate strategy for the survey. A pilot trial of the sampling and interviewing procedures was conducted during Sunday and Monday 4 and 5 June and the questionnaire was amended in the light of this experience. A mainstage survey of approximately 1000 interviews was carried out during the peak tourist season from 17-23 July 1978. Interviews were conducted on each day of the week from Monday to Sunday to overcome any differences which may have existed between visitors on different days of the week.

People were approached for interview after they had been round the monument. Interviewers were stationed at several interviewing points including the ramp near the monument, in the subway and by the ticket kiosk.

The sample

A sample of approximately 1,000 visitors was selected comprising men and women from four age bands; 16-25, 26-40, 41-65 and over 65 years. The quota sampling method was used whereby interviewers are asked to complete a set number of interviews with informants from each of these age and sex categories.

The number of interviews required from each age/sex category on any one day, the quotas, were set so that the distribution of the sample between these categories was equivalent to the distribution of the total population of visitors. This was obtained from preliminary observations of visitors to Stonehenge.

The number of people interviewed each day was also set to parallel the actual variation in the number of visitors on different days of the week.

The reasons for choosing this sampling method and further explanations of how the sample was designed are outlined in Appendix 1.

2. Response

The set sample comprised a total of 1,010 informants. On the final day of interviewing the weather was so bad that some of the quota categories remained unfilled by a total of 6 people. During the processing stages a further 3 questionnaires were eliminated as the interviews did not yield adequate data due to language difficulties. Thus 1,001 completed interviews were achieved.

In all 140 of the 1,004 people who were approached to be interviewed refused, giving a response rate of 86%. The reasons for refusal are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Reasons given by people who refused to be interviewed

	%
No time available	48
Language difficulties	34
Other reason	2
No reason given	16
Base (= 100%)	140

By far the most common reason for non response was lack of time which may have led to some underrepresentation of people in coach parties who were required to return to their coach within a given time. Non English speaking visitors comprised the next most common group of non responders. The use of bilingual interviewers enabled this non response to be kept to a minimum.

A record of estimated age and sex was made for 130 of the 140 non responders. The distribution is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Age and sex of persons refusing to be interviewed

Age (years)	Men %	Women %
16-25	30	32
26-40	36	26
41-65	25	30
Over 65	9	12
Base (= 100%)	53	77

There was no significant difference between the age/sex distribution of non responders and responders (see Table 3).

Throughout this report percentages have been based on the number of persons who answered the particular question under consideration. The small number of informants who were not able to answer or gave inadequate answers to individual questions were not included in the analysis. Attention has been drawn to differences between groups only when the differences were statistically significant at the 5% level.

3. Who visits Stonehenge in mid July?

Age and sex of the sample

The sample, which was selected from persons estimated to be aged 16 years or over, comprised 47% men and 53% women. Their age distribution is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Age and sex of sample interviewed

Age (years)	Men %	Women %
16-25	29	32
26-40	31	30
41-65	33	30
Over 65	7	8
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>487</i>

Residence

Illustrating the great attraction that Britain has for tourists, two thirds (66%) of the people visiting Stonehenge during the interviewing week came from overseas and only one third (34%) were from the United Kingdom. The nationality most commonly represented amongst the overseas visitors was, not surprisingly, American, which accounted for 26% of all visitors interviewed. Table 4 shows the country of residence of overseas visitors and the distribution of UK visitors among the Registrar General's standard regions.

Table 4 Residence of visitors

Overseas	%	UK	%
USA	39	Northern	3
Holland	13	Yorkshire & Humberside	6
Canada	9	East Midlands	6
Germany	8	East Anglia	5
Australia	7	South East	37
Denmark	4	South West	10
Sweden	3	West Midlands	6
Belgium	3	North West	10
New Zealand	2	Wales	4
Norway	2	Scotland	7
France	2	Northern Ireland	1
Switzerland	2	Other	1
Austria	2	Local - within 15 mile radius of Stonehenge	4
Italy	1		
Finland	1		
South Africa	1		
Other countries	1		
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>656</i>	<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>344</i>

Level of interest

It was thought that the opinions of visitors who had an academic or other serious interest in ancient monuments might vary from those of the tourists so we tried to gain some idea of people's reasons for visiting Stonehenge by asking:

Do you have any particular knowledge of or interest in historical sites or just a general interest?

Almost three quarters of the visitors (73%) said they had just a general interest. Only 6% reported making any formal study of archaeology or history and most of the remaining 21% claimed to have a particular interest in historical sites but of an amateur nature. Several had read books, seen documentaries or heard lectures about Stonehenge. Some people said they were interested in the astrological significance of the monument or in magic. A few people mentioned their interest in Stonehenge as an art form. We spoke to a sculptor, a few painters and someone who was designing a stage set based on Stonehenge.

4. Details of the visit

Whether an
organised tour or
visiting privately

Most visitors, 86%, arranged their own trip to Stonehenge. The rest came with an organised tour. Most (86%) of the people who came privately had planned to visit the monument, the rest just called in to see it while they were passing by. Of those who came on an organised tour more people had chosen their particular tour because Stonehenge was included than had made no particular choice to go to Stonehenge. Therefore, some 83% of all visitors had made a positive decision to visit Stonehenge. Table 5 summarises these results.

Table 5 Arrangements for visit

	%
Visiting privately	
Planned visit	74
Called in while passing by	12
	} 86
Came with organised tour	
Chosen because Stonehenge included	9
No choice	5
	} 14
Base (= 100%)	1,000

Length of visit

Table 6 illustrates the proportion of time spent at Stonehenge by visitors. The greater proportion of visitors (80%) spent 1 hour or less at Stonehenge. We noticed that organised tours tended to allow between $\frac{1}{2}$ hour and 1 hour to visit the monument. Only 2% of visitors stayed for 3 hours or longer.

Table 6 Time spent at Stonehenge

Time spent	%
$\frac{1}{2}$ hour or less	34
Over $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to 1 hour	46
Over 1 hour but less than 3 hours	18
3 hours or more	2
Base (= 100%)	996

How visitors viewed
Stonehenge

About three quarters of the visitors (76%) walked right around the outer perimeter fence, the rest only walked around part of it. However, most people (94%) walked along the pathway to have a close-up view of the stones.

5. Visitors' initial reactions to the new system of viewing Stonehenge

Very early on in the interview, before informants had been questioned about the pros and cons of the new viewing system they were asked:

How satisfied are you with the present system of viewing Stonehenge from outside the ropes would you say that you were very satisfied, satisfied or not satisfied?

The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Initial reactions to the new system of viewing Stonehenge

Level of satisfaction	%
Very satisfied	21
Satisfied	48
Not satisfied	31
Base (= 100%)	997

Approximately two thirds of the visitors were satisfied or very satisfied. However, one third was not satisfied. This was quite a large proportion of people whose initial reaction was one of disappointment about not being able to walk around the stones, and dissatisfaction about having to view from behind the ropes.

Who is not satisfied with the new system?

Age and sex

Table 8 shows for three age categories, the proportions of men and women who were not satisfied with the present system.

Table 8 Proportion of visitors not satisfied with the present system

	Age in years				All ages
	16-30	31-50	51 or over		
Men	40% (186)	35% (182)	20% (99)	34% (466)	
Women	32% (213)	29% (193)	20% (123)	28% (531)	
All persons	36% (399)	32% (375)	20% (222)	31% (997)	

Percentages are based on the numbers in brackets.

There was a small difference between the sexes in the proportion of people not satisfied with the new viewing system and a trend with age. On the whole men were less tolerant than the women. Opinions also tended to mellow with age particularly amongst visitors who were over 50. There were 40% of men aged 16-30 who were not satisfied with the

viewing system compared with only 20% of those aged 51 or over. A similar decrease was found among the female visitors.

Residence

Table 9 shows the level of satisfaction amongst UK visitors compared with those from overseas.

Table 9 Satisfaction of viewing Stonehenge from outside the ropes for UK and overseas visitors

Level of satisfaction	United Kingdom %	Overseas %
Very satisfied	14	25
Satisfied	48	48
Not satisfied	38	27
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>341</i>	<i>652</i>

There was quite a large difference of opinion between UK visitors and those from overseas. Well over a third (38%) of UK visitors were not satisfied with the viewing arrangements compared with just over a quarter (27%) of foreigners.

People used to foreign travel tended to accept restrictions in access to historical sites as the norm. Several people commented on the problems that other countries were experiencing in attempting to preserve their ancient monuments. British people were more inclined to look on Stonehenge as their own national heritage and therefore, were more likely to be dissatisfied with any attempts to limit their access to it.

It was felt that local people, those living within a 15 mile radius of Stonehenge, might be more dissatisfied than other British visitors but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate this.

Whether on tour or visiting privately

Table 10 gives the distribution of satisfaction by whether visitors came to Stonehenge on an organised tour or privately.

Table 10 Level of satisfaction of visitors on an organised tour compared with private visitors

Level of satisfaction	On tour %	Private visit %
Very satisfied	35	19
Satisfied	45	48
Not satisfied	20	33
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>860</i>

More people who had arranged their own visit to Stonehenge were not satisfied with the viewing arrangements (33%) than people who had come on an organised tour. Foreigners comprised higher proportions amongst the tour visitors than amongst those visiting privately. This result again illustrates the finding that the general tourist is more likely to accept viewing restrictions than someone who has made specific arrangements to see Stonehenge.

Level of interest

There was no difference at all in the proportions dissatisfied with the viewing system between visitors who just had a general interest in ancient monuments and those who claimed to have a special or academic interest. In each case 31% said they were not satisfied.

Previous visits to Stonehenge

However, an important factor which did contribute towards people's dissatisfaction was whether or not they had visited Stonehenge in the past when they had been able to wander freely among the stones. Of the people interviewed, 23% had visited Stonehenge before, while for 77% it was their first visit. Table 11 shows the proportions of people satisfied or not with the present viewing system by whether they had been to Stonehenge before.

Table 11 Satisfaction with viewing Stonehenge from outside the ropes by whether visitors had been before

Level of satisfaction	Visited Stonehenge before	First visit
	%	%
Very satisfied	17	23
Satisfied	42	49
Not satisfied	41	28
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>225</i>	<i>772</i>

A very substantial proportion (41%) of people who had already visited Stonehenge were not satisfied with having to view from behind the ropes. Most of these (95%) had been able to wander freely around the stones on their previous visit and now felt a disappointment that they could not have the same access. Of the people on their first visit just over a quarter (28%) were not satisfied.

Expectations of access

We asked everyone whether they had expected to be able to walk among the stones and touch them on this visit or whether they knew about the arrangements and expected to have to view from a distance. Over half the visitors (52%) had expected to be able to walk amongst the stones and only about a third (39%) knew that they would have to view from a distance. The remaining 9% had no expectations. Table 12 shows these answers distributed by whether or not people were satisfied.

Table 12 Whether people's expectations affected their level of satisfaction

Level of satisfaction	Access expected		
	Walk among the stones %	View from a distance %	No expectations %
Very satisfied	16	27	33
Satisfied	46	48	54
Not satisfied	38	25	13
<i>Base (= 100%)</i>	<i>523</i>	<i>389</i>	<i>85</i>

People's expectations have a marked effect on their level of disappointment on arriving at Stonehenge. There were far more dissatisfied visitors amongst those people who had expected to be able to wander freely among the stones (38% not satisfied) than among those who arrived at Stonehenge already knowing that they would have to view from a distance (25% not satisfied). The lowest proportion not satisfied (13%) was found amongst the people with no expectations at all. The highest proportion of very satisfied customers (33%) were also found among this group.

Summary

1. Twenty one per cent of visitors were very satisfied with viewing Stonehenge from outside the ropes, 48% said they were satisfied and 31% were not satisfied.
2. In general men were less tolerant than women about the restrictions in access and young people tended to be less tolerant than older visitors.
3. UK visitors were more likely to be dissatisfied than visitors from overseas.
4. When comparing the opinions of visitors who had come on an organised tour with those who had made their own private arrangements there was more dissatisfaction among the private visitors.
5. People's previous experiences and expectations of access were probably the main contributory factors towards the level of satisfaction with the arrangements. People who had been to Stonehenge before when they could walk amongst the stones and people who had come expecting such freedom of access were disappointed at the new viewing arrangements and expressed more dissatisfaction than people who knew about the restrictions or who had no prior expectations.

6. Advantages and disadvantages of the new viewing system

Everyone was asked what they thought were the advantages and disadvantages, if any, of people having to view from behind the ropes. To this question 15% replied that there were no advantages only disadvantages.

Advantages

The majority of the remaining 85%, who could see advantages in roping off the stones, mentioned preservation as the main advantage by stopping both wilful damage and general wear. There were 66% of visitors who mentioned things like:

Stops people damaging them, carving their initials, painting graffiti on the stones,

Stops people touching the stones, climbing all over them,

Prevents erosion, stops monument decaying.

About a quarter of the visitors (26%) considered that, without people standing amongst the stones, there was a better view of Stonehenge; the site was not cluttered up and a better perspective of the layout of the monument was gained.

Several people mentioned that it made the taking of photographs easier and the exclusion of people produced a better result. Other comments were made about the appearance of the monument; the setting looked better with the grass growing and the site was generally cleaner and tidier looking with no litter. Some people liked the peaceful atmosphere. A few said that things were better organised with the rope fences to control the crowds and keep the viewing orderly, and some felt that keeping visitors behind the rope fence reduced chances of accidents or being injured if the stones fell over.

Disadvantages

When asked what were the disadvantages of viewing from behind the ropes about a quarter of the visitors (26%) felt that there were no disadvantages. The remaining 74% who could see disadvantages gave a variety of reasons, most of which were associated with wanting to get nearer to the stones. Just over a quarter (27%) simply wanted to be closer to the stones, another 17% wanted to be able to go up and touch them. There were 20% who complained about the lack of atmosphere, saying things like:

You can't get the feel of the circle, you miss the great force in the centre, or you don't get any excitement from it.

A tenth of the people expressing disadvantages (10%) mentioned losing an impression of size by not being able to stand near the stones, for example:

You can't get near enough to appreciate the immensity, enormity of the stones.

A similar proportion (8%) said they could not see the detail of the carvings on the stones. A few people did not like the formality of the arrangements and felt shepherd and restricted.

7. Greater restrictions in access

Some of the interests concerned with the preservation of Stonehenge recommend that the public be excluded from the monument altogether by restricting viewing to outside the outer rope circle only, that is, outside the ditch, and not having a pathway running nearer to the stones. (see the diagram of the site in Chapter I).

After talking about the current viewing arrangements we asked everyone:

If you had to view the stones from outside the rope circle only, without being able to walk along a pathway near to the stones, would you be very satisfied, satisfied or not satisfied?

The answers are shown in Table 13.

Table 13 Satisfaction of having to
view from outside the rope
circle only

Level of satisfaction	%
Very satisfied	4
Satisfied	28
Not satisfied	68
Base (= 100%)	998

The data indicate that the proportion of people not satisfied with the viewing system might increase from one third (31% - see Chapter 5) to two thirds (68% - see above) if further restrictions were placed on the viewing arrangements by removing the pathway running near to the stones.

However, even though a substantial number of people would be disappointed, 87% of those who said that they would not be satisfied with further restrictions still felt it would be worth visiting Stonehenge.

8. Visitors' understanding of the wear and damage to Stonehenge

One of the aims of the survey was to find out whether people knew that Stonehenge had been suffering from wear and tear and whether they understood the reasons for roping off the monument.

We asked about wear and damage to the stones and the ground in two separate questions since people might understand that thousands of hands would gradually erode the carvings on the stones, for example, but be unaware of the possible damage that walking on the ground could cause. The questions asked were:

Did you know that the stones had been suffering from wear and damage?

and

Did you know that damage was being done to the archaeological features of the ground around the stones?

Several people answered spontaneously that although they did not know for a fact that damage was being done they would have expected or imagined this to be the case. These people have been shown separately from the Yes/No answers in Table 14.

Table 14 Whether visitors knew about the wear and damage to Stonehenge

	Whether knew about damage to:	
	The stones %	The ground %
Yes - knew	50	10
Expected/imagined so	17	8
Did not know	33	82
Base (= 100%)	998	997

As expected a lot more people knew about the damage caused to the stones (50%) or would have imagined that to be the situation (17%) than knew about wear to the ground (10% and 8%). The majority of visitors (82%) did not know of any wear or damage to the archaeological features surrounding the stones.

Wear or damage to the stones

Most (88%) of the people who knew about the wear on the stones had heard about this before they came to Stonehenge. Only 12% learnt about the wear and tear from the custodians or the Department of the Environment notices on arriving at Stonehenge.

To probe further the depth of people's understanding everyone was asked what they thought was the cause of this wear and damage. The answers are shown in Table 15. Percentages add to more than 100 as some people gave more than one reason.

Table 15 Visitors' ideas on causes of wear and damage to stones

	%
The elements, for example climate, weather, natural erosion	57
Deliberate damage, for example vandalism, people taking souvenirs	48
Non deliberate damage, for example too many people touching the stones	35
Time, age	11
Atmospheric pollution, for example that due to chemical waste, traffic	10
Other answers	5
Base (= 100%)	657

It is interesting to note that the most frequently reported reason for wear and damage was attributed to the weather and natural erosion, mentioned by 57%, which is not going to be prevented by rope barriers. This response indicated that many visitors did not immediately associate wear and damage to Stonehenge with the introduction of viewing restrictions. However, some people did mention damage due to visitors. More people thought that deliberate damage (48%) was the cause of wear than attributed it to the effect of large numbers of visitors (35%). In line with the current trend of awareness of our environment, 10% mentioned atmospheric pollution as a factor contributing to wear on the stones. A few people felt that vibration from cars or aircraft would have an effect.

Wear or damage to the ground

There were only 18% of visitors who knew or imagined that damage was being done to the archaeological features of the ground around the stones. The main effect of this damage is the gradual erosion of the mounds and ditches surrounding the stones. Most of these (70%) attributed wear to the simple effect of visitors walking about, 'trampling feet'. Only 11% mentioned deliberate damage or vandalism and 9% natural erosion or the elements. Various other answers included farmers ploughing the area or farm cattle grazing. Only one person mentioned the effects of the gravel path which had been previously laid around the stones.

In summary, although most people knew that damage was being done to the stones they did not generally attribute this to the non-malicious everyday wear and tear brought about by thousands of visitors. There was also considerable ignorance of the effects of visitors on the archaeological features of the ground around the stones. It may be that by providing people with more information on the damage which has been caused and a fuller explanation of the reasons for keeping them away from the stones there would be a greater acceptance of the new viewing restrictions.

9. The balance of opinion between the need for preservation and the desire for access

To everyone who had not already mentioned that the wear and damage might be caused simply by the thousands of visitors touching the stones and walking among them we explained that this was the main contributory factor. We then asked:

Do you think that wear and damage, caused by visitors, should be prevented or not?

Not surprisingly 91% said yes. People in general wish to say the right thing. However, a small minority of 3% expressed the extreme view in favour of free access to all and said no. The remaining 6% gave qualified answers such as:

Yes and no. You want to prevent damage but you can't deprive people of seeing some of their history.

This was fairly typical of some of the comments which had been made earlier by people who could see both sides of the argument, preservation versus access, and could not decide which side they supported. To determine how many people were of this conflicting opinion and how many held a definite view one way or the other we selected three statements. These were derived from answers made by visitors interviewed at the pilot stage and illustrated the three most commonly held views.

1. *It is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones.*
2. *It is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely.*
3. *Protecting the stones is important but we should be able to get closer.*

The statements were read out and informants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with each one. The results are shown in Table 16.

Table 16 Proportions of visitors agreeing or disagreeing with opinion statements

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Base (= 100%)
It is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones	% 25	75	989
It is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely	% 96	4	996
Protecting the stones is important but we should be able to get closer	% 54	46	993

Almost all visitors (96%) felt that it is *more important* to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone freedom of access, however, 25% did agree that people have a right to walk among the stones. Opinions were fairly evenly divided regarding whether or not people should be able to get closer to the monument.

By examining various combinations of the way people agreed or disagreed with these statements, some idea can be gained of how people balance the need for preservation with their desire for better access to the monument and a feeling that Stonehenge belongs to the nation and thus freedom of access is a right. On balance, opinion was on the side of preservation rather than access but not entirely.

The opinions expressed by the majority of visitors (90%) fell into three main categories: pro-preservation rather than free access; pro-preservation but a desire for closer access; and a conflict of opinions, on the one hand understanding the need for preservation but also feeling that people do hold some rights over their national heritage.

- I The first category of opinion, expressed by 41% of visitors, states that it is *not* everyone's right to walk freely among the stones, it is *more important* to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely and that protecting the stones is important and people should *not* be able to get closer. The answers comprise statement 1 - disagree, statement 2 - agree, statement 3 - disagree.

This opinion is very much on the side of preservation and protection and was the most commonly reported.

- II The second category of opinion, expressed by 31% of visitors, states that it is *not* everyone's right to walk freely among the stones, that it is *more important* to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely *but* that although protecting the stones is important people should be able to get closer. Statement 1 - disagree, statement 2 - agree, statement 3 - agree.

This group of people felt that although preservation is more important than complete freedom of access the restrictions currently imposed are a little excessive and they would have liked to get closer to the stones.

- III The third category, comprising 18% of visitors, felt a conflict of opinions. Many informants actually said as they responded to these statements that they knew they were being inconsistent but this was how they felt. It is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones but, it is *more important* to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely, and although protecting the stones is important people *should* be allowed to get closer. Statement 1 - agree, statement 2 - agree, statement 3 - agree.

There were two other combinations of opinion expressed by small minorities of visitors.

- IV A few people (3%) felt that free access was more important than preservation. They said that *it is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones*, it is *not* more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely and that although protecting the stones is important people should be allowed to get closer. Statement 1 - agree, statement 2 - disagree, statement 3 - agree.
- V A further 3% changed their mind as they were responding to the statements. They said that *it is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones* but it *is* more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely. Finally they said that protecting the stones is important and people should *not* be able to get closer. Statement 1 - agree, statement 2 - agree, statement 3 - disagree.

The remaining 4% gave other combinations of answers or did not respond to one of the statements.

Table 17 summarises these results.

Table 17 The proportions of visitors supporting the different combinations of the opinion statements

Opinion category	%	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3
		It is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones	It is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely	Protecting the stones is important but we should be able to get closer
I	41	disagree	agree	disagree
II	31	disagree	agree	agree
III	18	agree	agree	agree
IV	3	agree	disagree	agree
V	3	agree	agree	disagree
Other answers	4			
Base (= 100%) 1,001				

Who holds these opinions?

Age and sex

Table 18 shows these opinions distributed by age and sex. On the whole women were more pro-preservation than men, 44% compared with 37%, whereas more men than women felt that although preservation was important they would like to get closer to the stones (opinion category II). Similarly older

Table 18 Balance of opinion between preservation and access for men and women of different age-groups.

		Men				Women				
		Age in years				Age in years				
		16-30	31-50	Over 50	All men	16-30	31-50	Over 50	All women	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
I	Pro-preservation above access	27	41	50	37	33	46	62	44	
II	Preservation important but would prefer more access	37	36	28	35	32	29	20	29	
III	Conflict between a right to access and need for preservation	25	15	15	19	21	16	12	17	
IV	Access more important than preservation	5	2	1	3	5	2	3	4	
V	Change of mind - access is a right but ultimately preservation is more important	1	3	3	2	6	5	1	4	
	Remainder	5	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	
Base (= 100%)		186	182	99	467	215	193	124	534	

people were more likely than the young to support preservation above freedom of access, 62% of the women in the over 50 age-group supported opinion I compared with 33% of the younger 16-30 year olds. The comparable figures for men were 50% and 27%.

On tour or visiting privately

There was quite a difference between people visiting Stonehenge on an organised tour and those who had come privately in the proportions expressing opinion I. There were 57% of tour visitors who felt that preservation came first and foremost above freedom of access compared with only 38% of private visitors. More of the visitors who came privately (33%) felt that although protecting the stones was important they should be able to get closer, opinion II, than visitors on tour (23%).

UK or foreign visitor

Table 19 gives the distribution of opinion amongst UK visitors compared with those from overseas.

A greater proportion of overseas visitors were pro-preservation above access than UK visitors. UK visitors were more likely to hold the conflicting opinion than foreigners.

Table 19 Balance of opinion between preservation and access by residence

Opinion category	UK %	Foreign %
I	33	45
II	30	32
III	26	14
IV	6	2
V	2	4
Remainder	3	3
Base (= 100%)	341	656

Level of interest

There was no apparent difference of opinion between the people who reported a specific interest in ancient monuments and those who expressed a general interest.

Summary

1. In answer to opinion statements read out to them, 25% of visitors agreed that it is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones, 96% agreed that it is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely and 54% agreed that protecting the stones was important but that visitors should be able to get closer.
2. The balance of attitudes between preservation and access expressed by the majority of visitors conformed to one of three main categories of opinion.

The first, expressed by 41% of visitors, was strongly pro-preservation and considered that protection was more important than access.

The second, expressed by 31% of visitors, considered that although preservation was more important than complete freedom of access a closer view of the stones should be provided.

The third, expressed by 18% of visitors, reflected a conflict of opinion between considering that, on the one hand, free access to Stonehenge is a right but that on the other hand, it is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely.

10. Overall satisfaction with the new viewing system

After giving visitors the opportunity to think about the pros and cons of the new viewing arrangements and explaining about the damage to Stonehenge and the reasons for restricting access we asked people whether, overall, they were happy or not with the present viewing system. Three quarters (74%) thought that, overall, they were happy. This was a larger proportion than the 69% who had said earlier on in the interview that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the arrangements. Table 20 compares visitors' answers to the two questions.

Table 20 Visitors' initial assessment of satisfaction with the viewing arrangements by their overall rating

After consideration	Initially		
	Very satisfied %	Satisfied %	Not satisfied %
Happy	98	86	39
Not happy	2	14	61
Base (= 100%)	214	473	307

Most of the people who were 'very satisfied' initially remained happy about the viewing arrangements (98%). A few of those who were only 'satisfied' at first, changed their mind after considering the situation and said that overall, they were not happy (14%). However, after thinking about the pros and cons of the new viewing arrangements 39% of visitors who had been not satisfied initially changed their minds and later said that they were happy, overall, about the arrangements.

11. Suggestions for better ways of viewing Stonehenge

We asked all visitors whether they would like to suggest any better ways of viewing Stonehenge, which would still prevent wear and damage.

More than half of the sample (59%) did not suggest any better way but the remainder were prepared to make a variety of suggestions some of which were extremely imaginative.

About a third of those who made alternative suggestions favoured viewing from a higher level or directly from above. Observation platforms, raised walkways and viewing towers were mentioned as were bridges and even helicopter or balloon trips over the top of Stonehenge. Quite a few people thought the pathways should be resited closer to the stones or through the centre of the stone circle (22%) or that the rope circle should be smaller allowing a closer view of Stonehenge (16%).

One compromise suggestion, mentioned by 16%, was that small parties of people who had a genuine, serious interest in Stonehenge could be taken inside the monument with a guide. This could be either by special arrangement or at a pre-determined time each week. Other people felt that with more guides and stricter security to prevent damage free access could be maintained (19%).

Several people (6%) envisaged an assortment of schemes to cover Stonehenge completely, presumably to protect the stones from the ageing effect of the atmosphere. Plastic or glass domes were suggested, a tent held up by air pressure, covering with plastic sheeting or using a collapsible cover. Protection for individual stones was also suggested by enclosing them in mesh, perspex, ropes or even electrifying them. A few people (3%) felt that an easier way of discouraging visitors would be to put up the entrance fee.

Other answers included limiting access to one stone at a time; covering the ground with rubber matting, plastic turf or ramps; and issuing binoculars or erecting telescopes trained onto the carvings and details on specific stones.

At this question several people spontaneously mentioned a need for more information, labelling of stones, pictures and so on. These issues were covered in the next section of the interview.

12. Visitors' aids to understanding Stonehenge

The model

Alongside the main site stands a scale model of Stonehenge, the largest stones being about two feet high. Visitors were asked whether they had looked at the model and, if so, whether or not they found it helpful. Their answers are shown in Table 21.

Table 21 Visitors' attitudes to model of Stonehenge

	%
Looked at model and found it helpful	57
Looked at model but found it <i>not</i> helpful	37
Did not look at model	6
Base (= 100%)	980

Only 6% of visitors had not looked at the model and nearly three fifths of those who had, found it helpful. This was true for both UK and foreign visitors.

Those who did not find the model helpful commented that they would like more information about the model itself and it would be helpful if the stones were labelled. A few people suggested that a model of Stonehenge as it looked at each main period would be useful, others thought a compass bearing would help. Some visitors did not like the model and thought it looked rather artificial alongside the real thing. As it stands it might have more impact away from the main site. However, the general feeling conveyed by the comments was that it should be more of a teaching aid than a simple replica of Stonehenge as it is today.

Information boards

Standing at several points around the perimeter of the site are boards describing Stonehenge at various stages of its development. Visitors were asked if they had looked at the information boards and whether or not they found them helpful. Their answers are given in Table 22.

Table 22 Visitors' attitudes to the information boards

	%
Looked at boards and found them helpful	75
Looked at boards but found them <i>not</i> helpful	14
Did not look at boards	11
Base (= 100%)	984

The information boards were judged more helpful than the model. Three quarters of the visitors interviewed found them helpful compared with just over a half who had found the model helpful. However, there were still a quarter of visitors who either did not bother to look at the information boards or did not find them helpful.

Those who did not find them helpful made a variety of comments. Just under half the comments (47%) complained of the lack of information given on the boards. A fuller explanation was requested of the possible reasons for building Stonehenge and how it was constructed. Visitors would have liked notes identifying the different features of the monument and naming the main stones. Some 17% found the information which had been given rather confusing and 14% felt that translations should be provided for foreign visitors. A few people requested a tape recorded narrative which could be paid for separately.

Leaflet

During the visits to Stonehenge prior to the mainstage, leaflets describing Stonehenge were given out to each visitor so a question was incorporated into the interview about the helpfulness of this information. Unfortunately, by the height of the summer season these leaflets were in short supply and many of the visitors interviewed during the survey had not received them. The results to the question *Did you look at the leaflet?* are shown in Table 23.

Table 23 Visitors' reactions to the leaflet about Stonehenge

	%
Not had leaflet	79
Yes - looked at it	14
Did not look at it	7
Base (= 100%)	969

Only 21% of visitors had received an information leaflet and out of these about two thirds had looked at it. When asked if they found it helpful 75% said yes and 25% said no. There was a greater difference between UK and foreign visitors than for the other information sources, 83% of UK visitors finding the leaflet helpful compared with 73% of foreign visitors. There are versions in French and German but these were not always available.

Exhibition centre

The Department of the Environment is considering building an exhibition centre a short distance away from the main site, so a question was asked to estimate it's potential use:

If there was an exhibition centre explaining more about Stonehenge, about 10 mins walk away from the stones, would you have visited it today?

Based on 998 replies 87% of the people said yes and 13% said no, comprising approximately equal proportions of UK and foreign visitors.

A few people gave qualified answers to this question, for example:

If it (the exhibition centre) were nearby and provided it was free.

Other people suggested that a short film or slide show or pre-recorded talk would be possible at such a centre and would be helpful.

Museums

All visitors were told that there are things from Stonehenge in the museums at Salisbury and Devizes, and then asked whether they had been or were planning to go and look at them. The answers are shown in Table 24.

Table 24 Visits to museums

	%
Been or planning to go to Salisbury museum	19
Been or planning to go to Devizes museum	1
Been or planning to go to both	3
Been or planning to go to neither	74
No choice - on a tour	3
Base (= 100%)	996

Three quarters of the visitors interviewed had neither been nor were planning to visit Salisbury or Devizes museums, Salisbury museum was the favourite among those people showing such an interest.

The staff

Visitors were asked whether they had spoken to or listened to any of the custodians who work at Stonehenge and, if so, whether or not they had been helpful. The answers are shown in Table 25.

Table 25 Visitors' views on staff

	%
Found staff helpful	14
Found staff not helpful	2
Had not spoken to any staff	84
Base (= 100%)	1,000

Only a small proportion of visitors found the staff unhelpful. However, the majority of visitors did not speak with any of the staff. This is not surprising considering the number of people who visit Stonehenge during the summer months. In fact, a few visitors commented that they would have liked to talk to the custodians but there were not enough on the site and they were always busy with other people.

In summary, most visitors took the trouble to look at and read the information about Stonehenge which was presented to them. However, up to about a quarter of these people felt that the information given was inadequate and some thought

the information boards confusing. Visitors' comments conveyed the impression that additional information points containing more comprehensive explanations of the possible uses of Stonehenge and descriptions of its various stages would be appreciated. Translation into one or two foreign languages would help some overseas visitors. One person suggested that, in the absence of such information, visitors should be advised to purchase a booklet before they go round the monument.

A desire for more information which is easily available on site was endorsed by the support given, by 87% of visitors, to the suggestion of building an exhibition centre near to the monument. However, only 20% of visitors were able or prepared to make the journey to Salisbury or Devizes to look at the Stonehenge exhibits in the museums.

Appendix 1 Sampling report

by Delyth Owen

Sample requirements

A representative sample of about 1,000 adult visitors to Stonehenge was required. It was decided that the sample be selected and interviewed over a period of one week as it was thought that the number and type of visitors could vary according to the day of the week. The week chosen for the survey period was 17-23 July 1978, during the peak tourist season.

Sample design

Two possible methods of selecting the sample were initially considered.

i. Probability sample

This involves taking a systematic sample of 1 in n visitors leaving the monument. This would have ensured that all visitors had an equal chance of selection and would have been theoretically possible as all visitors pass through one 'exit' gate as they leave. However, the flow of visitors was very uneven and a large and unpredictable number of interviewers would have been needed to cope with the busier times. Even then it would be almost impossible to keep a continuous and accurate count if, for example, a large party of visitors left together.

ii. Quota sample

L Kish, in his textbook *Survey Sampling* published by John Wiley and Sons, defines a quota sample in three steps.

1. Sizes of subclasses are estimated based on some information relating to the population studied.
2. Quotas of desired numbers of sample cases are calculated proportionally to the population subclasses.
3. The sample quotas are divided among the interviewers who then do their best to find persons who fit the restrictions of their quota controls.

A quota sample is therefore controlled by one or more personal characteristics of informants. Characteristics selected are ideally those which are expected to correlate closely with data collected in the survey.

The advantage of this sampling method is that interviewers are asked to complete a certain number of interviews per day with informants conforming to the set characteristics, but no further restrictions are placed on who should be interviewed. Therefore, interviewing can be spread evenly throughout the day between a smaller number of interviewers than would be required for a random sample. Because of the resultant cost savings and the practical convenience it was decided to use quota sampling.

Setting the quotas

The variables chosen to define the quotas were sex and four age-groups; 16-25, 26-40, 41-64 and 65 years and over. Variables used have to be easily identified by interviewers and related to the survey variables. UK or non UK was considered as a variable which might influence visitors' opinions. This was later found to be the case. However, nationality is not easily identified by sight and as observation was the method used to establish the distribution of these variables within the population of visitors, UK/non UK was rejected as a basis for setting the quotas.

In order to reflect the total population of visitors as accurately as possible it was necessary to obtain some background data, namely:

1. The distribution of visitors by sex and age
2. The distribution of visitors on different days of the week

An initial visit to Stonehenge was made in May 1978 to pilot the identification procedure. A second visit was made as near to the survey period as possible, on Wednesday 12 July 1978, to count and classify, according to estimated sex and age-group, all persons entering the monument between 9.30 am (opening time) and 5.30 pm, by which time there were very few visitors arriving. On this occasion figures were also obtained giving the number of people visiting Stonehenge during each day of the preceding week; this information was used to distribute the required sample between the different days of the survey period.

Data obtained

Table A1 Age and sex distribution of visitors to Stonehenge on 12 July 1978

Age-group (years)	Men %	Women %	All persons %
0-15	22	16	19
16-25	22	26	24
26-40	24	25	25
41-64	25	25	25
65 and over	7	8	7
Base (= 100%)	2,014	2,149	4,163

Table A2 Number of visitors during the week preceding the survey period

Day (3-9 July 1978)	Visitors %
Monday	12
Tuesday	14
Wednesday	13
Thursday	13
Friday	13
Saturday	16
Sunday	19
Base (= 100%)	26,685

Quotas set

It was assumed that the distribution of visitors by age and sex would remain constant over the different days of the week and so the total required sample, of approximately 1,000 adults, was initially distributed among the sex and age-groups (over 16 years) in the same proportions as had been observed on 12 July. After rounding up to whole numbers the interviews required in each sub category, the total came to 1,010, shown in Table A3.

Table A3 Distribution of required sample by age and sex

Age-group	Men	Women	All persons
16-25	131 (13)	168 (17)	299
26-40	145 (14)	163 (16)	308
41-64	152 (15)	163 (16)	315
65 and over	41 (4)	47 (5)	88
Total	469	541	1,010 (100)

Percentages are shown in brackets.

After distributing the sample between the days of the survey week in the same proportions as in Table A2, the final quotas were set, as shown in Table A4.

Table A4 Distribution of set interviews by sex, age and day of the week

Day of the week 17-23 July '78	Age-group and sex								
	16-25		26-40		41-64		65 and over		All persons
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Monday	16	20	18	18	18	19	5	6	120
Tuesday	17	23	20	22	20	22	5	6	135
Wednesday	18	22	19	22	20	22	6	6	135
Thursday	17	23	19	22	21	22	5	6	135
Friday	18	22	19	22	20	22	6	6	135
Saturday	21	27	23	26	24	25	6	8	160
Sunday	24	31	27	31	29	31	8	9	190
Total	299		308		315		88		1,010

Interviewing

Interviewers could achieve up to 40 interviews in one day, therefore three were required to work on Monday, four on Tuesday to Friday and five at the weekend. The quotas were distributed evenly among the interviewers so that each quota included visitors from each of the eight age/sex groups.

Comparison of interviewers' estimates of age with the actual age of informants

Interviewers were required to initially estimate the age-group of each informant approached. Age was later recorded as part of the interview. Data for both estimated age and actual age were available for 813 informants. The comparisons are shown in Table A5.

Table A5 Distribution of informants by actual age and age estimated by interviewer

Interviewers' estimate of age	Informants' actual age			
	16-25 %	26-40 %	41-64 %	65 and over %
16-25	97	15	-	-
26-40	3	83	26	-
41-64	-	2	73	52
65 and over	-	-	1	48
Base (= 100%)	247	249	255	62

In 69% of the 813 cases the interviewers' estimate of age-group was correct. In 2% of cases the informants' age was overestimated and in the remaining 29% age was underestimated. In particular, members of the 'over 65' age-group were misclassified into the '41-64' age-group in over 50% of cases.

The quotas were completed based on actual age once this had been established. However, the quotas were set by observation and hence estimated age, based on estimates made by office staff rather than the field interviewers who selected the quotas during the survey week. It is, therefore, possible that the sample contains more people aged 41 - 64 and fewer aged 65 and over than it should. As the proportion of dissatisfied visitors decreases with age (Table 8) any sample bias would have the effect that this survey has possibly overestimated dissatisfaction rather than underestimated.

Appendix 2 The questionnaire

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VISITORS TO STONEHENGE

Interviewer name _____					
Auth. number _____	Serial No.				
Day _____					
INTRODUCE - <i>talking to people visiting Stonehenge</i>					
Estimate A&S					
1. Have you come here with an organised tour or privately?					
organised tour				1	ask (a)
privately				2	ask (b)
IF ORGANISED TOUR (1)					
(a) Did you choose the tour because Stonehenge was included or did you have no choice?					
Stonehenge included				1	
no choice				2	
IF PRIVATELY (2)					
(b) Did you plan to visit Stonehenge or did you just call in while you were passing by?					
planned visit				1	
just passing by				2	
2. Do you have any particular knowledge of or interest in historical sites or just a general interest?					
Yes - particular knowledge/interest (<i>specify</i>) ...				1	
No/just general interest				2	
3. Did you walk right round the rope circle?					
Yes				1	
Part way round (<i>spontaneous</i>) .				2	
No				3	
4. And did you walk along the pathway?					
Yes				1	
No				2	

5.	How satisfied are you with the present system of viewing Stonehenge from outside the ropes		
	would you say you were very satisfied ..	1	
	satisfied ..	2	
	or not satisfied? .	3	
6.	(i) What do you think are the advantages, if any, of people viewing from outside the ropes? (<i>specify</i>)		
	No advantages	1	
	(ii) What do you think are the disadvantages, if any, (of people viewing from outside the ropes)? (<i>specify</i>)		
	No disadvantages	1	
7.	If you had to view the stones from outside the rope circle, only, without being able to walk along a pathway near to the stones would you be.....		
	very satisfied	1	} go to Q8 ask (a)
	satisfied	2	
	or not satisfied? ,.....	3	
	IF NOT SATISFIED (3)		
	(a) Would it still be worth visiting Stonehenge?		
	Yes	1	
	No	2	
	<i>Check</i>		
8.	Have you been to Stonehenge before?		
	Yes	1	ask (a)
	No	2	go to Q9
	IF YES (1)		
	(a) When you came here before how close to the stones could you go?		
	right up to them/amongst them	1	
	other (<i>specify</i>).....	2	

Introduce if necessary
(Much of the wear and damage has been caused by large numbers of visitors.)

13. Do you think that wear and damage, caused by visitors, should be prevented or not?

Yes 1
No 2
Qualified answer (*specify*) . 3

14. Now I'm going to read you some comments that people have made, could you tell me whether you agree or disagree with each one ..

(i) It is everyone's right to walk freely among the stones

agree 1
disagree 2

(ii) it is more important to protect Stonehenge than to allow everyone to walk about freely

agree 1
disagree 2

(iii) Protecting the stones is important but we should be able to get closer

agree 1
disagree 2

15. So overall, are you happy with the present system of viewing or not?

Yes - happy . 1
Not happy ... 2

16. Do you want to suggest any better ways of viewing Stonehenge that would still prevent the wear and damage?

IF YES *Specify* Does not want to suggest other ways . 1

17. Did you look at the?

IF YES

(a) Did you findhelpful?

record spontaneous comments

Model	Information boards	Leaflet
Yes..1	Yes...1	Yes..1
No...2	No....2	No...2
Yes..1	Yes...1	Yes..1
No...2	No....2	No...2

18. Did you speak or listen to any of the staff?	Yes	1	ask (a) go to Q19
	No	2	
IF YES (1) (a) Did you find them helpful?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
19. Do you think refreshment facilities are necessary at Stonehenge?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
20. If there was an exhibition centre explaining more about Stonehenge, about 10 mins walk away from the stones, would you have visited it today?	Yes	1	
	No	2	
21. How long are you spending here today?	Specify _____ hrs _____ mins		
22. There are things from Stonehenge in the museums at Salisbury and Devizes. Have you been, or are you planning to go and look at them?	Yes - Salisbury	1	
	Yes - Devizes	2	
	Yes - both	3	
	No - neither	4	
	No - no option	5	
23. Code sex:	Male	1	
	Female	2	
24. What was your age last birthday? _____ yrs.			
25. And where do you live?			
Specify town and county if U.K.	U.K.	1	
	Overseas (Specify Country)	2	

489

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